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INQUIRY IS SOUGHT ON AID TO REBELS

Congress Is Asked to Examine
National Security Council
Role With Nicaraguans

By JOEL BRINKLEY

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Aug. 14 — Common Cause, the Washington-based lobbying group, called today for Congressional investigations of the National Security Council's involvement with the Nicaraguan rebels over the last year.

Last week the White House confirmed reports, first published in The New York Times, that the National Security Council had been helping several Nicaraguan rebel groups plan some operations and raise private funds. The rebels have been fighting to overthrow the Nicaraguan Government.

A senior Administration official said the help given to the rebels had included "tactical influence" on their military operations since Congress voted last spring to end all direct aid to the rebels.

President Reagan and other White House officials defended the activities, saying they did not violate "the letter or the spirit of the law."

'Full Investigation' Sought

In letters to the chairmen of the Senate and House intelligence committees today, Fred Wertheimer, president of Common Cause, called on both bodies to "initiate a full investigation of whether the N.S.C. activities violate the letter or the spirit of the law."

The ban on aid to the rebels ended last week, when President Reagan signed a foreign aid bill authorizing \$27 million in nonmilitary aid to the rebels. Until then, the law, known as the Boland Amendment, prohibited the Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Department "or any other agency or entity of the U.S. involved in intelligence activities" from spending any money on behalf of the rebels.

President Reagan's executive order on the nation's intelligence agencies says one of the National Security Council's responsibilities is to serve as "the highest executive branch entity that provides review of, guidance for and direction to the conduct of all national foreign intelligence, counterintelligence and special activities."

Mr. Wertheimer's letter says the National Security Council's involvement with the rebels "during the period the Boland Amendment has been in effect raises major questions of whether this broad congressional prohibition has been violated and, if not, whether N.S.C.'s activities violate the spirit and intent of Congress in enacting the amendment."